

REMARKS

Applicants add new claims 23 and 24. Support for new claims 23 and 24 can be found, for example, at pages 4-5 of the specification. Entry of the amendment is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 18 and 21-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,130,292 to Harwood et al. or EP 709499 to Auerbach each in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,454,189 to Fukata for reasons of record.

Claims 6, 8 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,130,292 to Harwood et al. or EP 709499 to Auerbach each in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,454,189 to Fukata and EP 353717 to Senga for reasons of record.

Applicants are presently preparing a response to the outstanding rejection, and expect to file the response soon. A request for Petition for Extension of Time, Suspension of Action, RCE and Telephone Interview is concurrently filed herewith.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


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